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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6694  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 2073  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1444  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 1079  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2144  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USTRANSCOM SCOTT AFB IL PRIORITY  
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RHEFAAA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY 1633  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY 1493  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2859  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2556

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASTANA 001914

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EUR/RUS, EUR/RPM, DRL

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [KDEM](#) [OSCE](#) [RS](#) [UZ](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: "BIG FRIEND" MEDDLES AGAINST U.S.  
INTERESTS

REF: A. ASTANA 1899

[1](#)B. ASTANA 1897

[1](#)C. ASTANA 1772

[1](#)D. ASTANA 1512

Classified By: Ambassador Richard E. Hoagland: 1.4 (B), (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Deputy Foreign Minister Kairat Umarov suggested on October 21 that disinformation from Russian intelligence played a role in Yevgeniy Zhovtis' conviction and prison sentence being upheld. He also said that Russian intelligence is getting the word to President Nazarbayev that the United States has a secret deal to establish a new military base in Uzbekistan. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) At the European Commission reception on October 21 to celebrate the 15th anniversary of relations with Kazakhstan, which the visiting OSCE Ambassadors' delegation also attended, I again pulled aside Deputy Foreign Minister Kairat Umarov to follow up on my conversation with him the previous evening (ref A) about the October 20 court decision upholding the conviction and four-year prison sentence of human rights advocate Yevgeniy Zhovtis (ref B). I gave Umarov a heads-up copy of the statement the Embassy subsequently released at opening of business on October 22 (text in ref B, para eight). He read it carefully and asked, "Can't you drop the reference to the government of Kazakhstan?" I replied, "No. Period."

[1](#)3. (C) I assured Umarov that I am doing my best to provide full-spectrum reporting to Washington to help manage this crisis. Umarov said that he, too, had fully briefed State Secretary-Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev on our conversation the night before. Umarov said Saudabayev had been dismissive at first, but then had turned sober and said he would inform President Nazarbayev of the "strong U.S. view."

A DEAL WITH UZBEKISTAN FOR A NEW U.S. MILITARY BASE?

[1](#)4. (C) Umarov then interrupted our conversation about Zhovtis to press me to confirm -- "give me your word of honor" -- that the United States has not reached a secret

agreement with Uzbekistan's President Islom Karimov to establish a new major U.S. military base at Navoi to replace Karshi-Khanabad. I asked why he would pose this question again when I had already authoritatively shot it down with Saudabayev (ref C). Umarov responded that the "Big Friend" (i.e., Russia) is pressing this report at every possible opportunity, saying they have "proof" that SCA Assistant Secretary Robert Blake had reached a secret agreement with Karimov during their recent meeting in Tashkent. Umarov said the "Big Friend" is portraying it as evidence that the United States cannot be trusted when it comes to Kazakhstan's national interests.

"BIG FRIEND" LINKS ZHOVTIS TO "COLOR REVOLUTION"?

15. (C) I returned the conversation to the Zhovtis affair, reminding Umarov that I had trusted Saudabayev who had advised me to "stand down and be quiet" and that a solution would be found in the appeal process (ref D). Umarov confided that it was his understanding that a plan had indeed been considered, but that "Big Friend," in relation with "the liaison body" (i.e., Kazakhstan's Committee for National Security, KNB), had gotten the ear of the president that the United States wants to remove him from power, and has latched onto Zhovtis as the way to do so, portraying U.S. interest in Zhovtis as evidence that the United States is angling to stage a "color revolution" in Kazakhstan. "They're stronger than we thought," Umarov lamented. I told him that we, together, with the other progeressive elements around the president, must refute these views -- we must continue to be bedrock honest with each other, focused intently on truth and

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pragmatic reality.  
HOAGLAND